



Meeting Two Summary: Washington Economic Development Commission

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What are the Most Important Location Factors for Businesses?

- Workforce preparedness with supportive education system
- Opportunities for business input to education/demand driven system
- Strong training environment, community colleges funded
- Private training programs conducted in-state
- Talent pool
- Tax and regulatory systems
- Research capabilities through higher ed system
- Quality of life
- Physical infrastructure
- Infrastructure financing
- Mobility/ability to deliver goods to market
- Long-term policy-making
- Access to markets, international and domestic
- Affordable housing/favorable permitting and regulations
- Capital availability
- Business community vitality
- Good marketing environment
- Reasonable environmental policies and regulations
- Viability of the land to support business
- Water availability
- Opportunities for “two careers”
- Diversity of the community and its receptivity to same
- Degree of polarization among haves vs. have-nots
- Knowledge transfer to all communities/ability to support knowledge based jobs
- Strength of opportunities for rural communities/incentives, level playing field
- Healthcare availability and affordability
- Health of traditional value-added industries
- Productivity

How Does Washington Stack Up?

- Need for more information transfer: get the word out to businesses and communities about what resources are available
- Branding, could be more highly developed, externally and internally
- Marketing needs to be conducted in a sustained manner
- More internal marketing could be conducted to build the image
- Regressive tax structure is a problem
- Trust in government is an issue
- Many feel disenfranchised
- More resources needed for ED; CTED budget keeps suffering
- Local level resources for ED need to be augmented, especially for small business

What Can We Control?

- Costs for doing business in agriculture?
- Investment in higher education and workforce?
- Availability and quality of information on ED needs and ROI for spending?
- The message/branding/marketing?
- Local option authority for ED?
- Intrastate credits for relocation?
- Allocation of state resources and spending?
- Industry clustering/partnering/combining resources

Issues for the Commission

- Set functions and priorities
- Delineate long-term and short-term issues
- Immediate attention to: workforce development policies; connecting workforce and economic development programs & policies; improving attraction and retention; access to capital; investment in education
- Best practices in economic development/what do other states do?
- Who are we, and what is the Commission about?
- Strategic planning, including quality of life and tools for success
- Creating an environment where business can succeed
- Globalization: implications for the state and how the state's trade program fits in
- Positioning of the state and the message we give out
- Action: being pro-active
- Short-term issues, including: Washington success stories; building image and improving marketing; funding the state's ED agenda [can we find dedicated revenue sources; what do other states use?]

- CTED and its relationship with other organizations
- The message: Washington invests in its people, businesses and quality of life

Committees and Task Forces

- Executive Committee
 - Policy Committee
 - Marketing and Communications
 - Workforce
 - Outreach
 - Task Force on Vision/Planning/Resources
1. Executive Committee may be Chairman and Committee Chairs
 2. CTED will solicit volunteers for other committees
 3. Task Force on Vision will begin to lay groundwork for strategic ED plan and to explore possible resources for ED

Future Meetings

- February 25: in Tacoma
- May 14: in Yakima (we begin to get out around the state)
- August 14: somewhere outside of Seattle and other big cities
- November 19: may be piggybacked with annual ED summit

Analysis: What Central Themes Emerge?

- 1.) Workforce and training, in one form or another constitutes one of the most frequently mentioned factors in business location. This has several components, but clearly the Commission has an interest in this issue.

What kinds of things can a Commission do about workforce?

- Provide a central point of contact for getting relevant parties together to share information
- Convene officials from among business, government and education & training to better coordinate training initiatives and business/education partnerships
- Serve as a creative body for exploring new avenues for business/education partnerships
- Develop systems for funneling business input to educators and trainers to build a more demand-driven system
- Serve as a continuous source of support for allocation of public and private resources

dedicated to education and training

- 2.) Marketing, in various forms, is also high on the Commission's list. This tends to reflect both external and internal marketing needs.

What can the Commission do about marketing?

- Review and comment on the CTED marketing plan
- Assist in crafting the state's brand and unified message
- Use its outreach efforts to directly support communication within the state
- Engage its members to serve as Washington "ambassadors" outside the state
- Serve as a consistent supporter of allocating state resources to external marketing
- Help secure private resources to support marketing efforts

- 3.) Commission members seem to also be quite concerned about:

- Resources available for economic development, including the CTED budget
- The utilization of other agencies and organizations within the state
- The need to develop a vision of what the state is, what it can be, and how to achieve these goals
- Outreach to small business, rural communities

In effect, undertaking an ED strategic planning process would allow the Commission to become engaged on all of these issues. This is consistent with the best practices of other successful state commissions, though it should also be accompanied by the establishment of measurable objectives for the Commission, CTED and the state economy.

Outreach will be important to the successful attainment of the marketing objectives and to the building of support for and input to the strategic plan. This should go beyond holding meetings of the Commission in cities other than Seattle; it means conducting special meetings with community leaders in strategic locations around the state, probably with one or more Commission members as hosts and/or participants. These should be facilitated meetings, with participation by local organizations and local economic developers, who would help develop lists of invitees.

Best practices from other states can be studied as a source of ideas on how to enhance programs, augment resources and guide the work of the Commission. Ideas on creative programming and dedicated funding sources can be developed for discussion.

It must be noted that the Commission has identified issues and activities that conform to state commission best practices. Workforce and marketing are common priorities for such commissions, and strategic planning is the most common element of such organizations' work

programs.

Where to from here?

The Commission has gotten off to a positive, and quite ambitious start. Members appear to be engaged, and certainly have brought a great degree of expertise and enthusiasm to the process. Launching the committee system will allow the Commission to initiate vehicles for conducting its ongoing business, and to extend its membership and outreach by enlisting committee members from outside the Commission. The next two meetings should be used to set some specific goals in terms of timing and projected accomplishments. The committees should begin meeting and some community outreach forums should be conducted. Performance measures for the Commission should be explored, with a one-year time frame in mind. Specific program and policy objectives should be explored at the next two meetings and definite activities can be identified, which can be carried out by the committees.